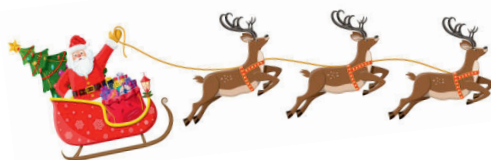


Blaxhall Village Newsletter



Autumn 2020

Christmas Cheer



OK, on the face of it, things still seem a little grim, back in lockdown and another three months with no village events to report on, but there's finally some hope on the horizon! All being well the first vaccinations will take place by Christmas, so hopefully some normality by next spring and the real chance of summer ball, festival and fete returning. In the meantime we can look forward to what may be Suffolk's only drive-in carol service, and enjoy what is surely the county's coolest bus shelter. Full details of the drive-in can be found on page 6, while the story of the bus shelter book-swap is on page 7. Also inside, a word from the rector, PC latest, and details of

operation Christmas Uplift from The Ship. So Merry Christmas to all and here's to a happy and 'normal' New Year!



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A Message from our Rector, Rev Rachel

As I write this piece for the village newsletter, it is pouring with rain, so no gardening today, and we are part way through our second lockdown, so no trip out for some retail therapy either. I guess I will probably do a puzzle or two from the daily paper, read a bit more of my current novel and get cosy in front of my fire. Perhaps the sun will be out tomorrow and I can finish clearing some of the autumn weeds from the garden then.

I suspect you will all have your ways of coping during this season and during the particularities of this unprecedented time in our lives. We are fond of our routines and the security of knowing most things are stable around us. We are very blessed to be where we are; Covid 19 will have affected some of you, but for most of us, it is less immediate and the ravages of the virus are easier to avoid in a rural village.

But into the peace of Blaxhall has swept a little chaos. Some of you will have been moved with compassion for the occupant of the church porch and some of you will have been horrified that such a thing can happen and be tolerated for a short while in the community. There will be others who have kept their distance and hardly been affected by a stranger in your midst.

This makes me think of how the couple might have been viewed who turned up as refugees in a small town some 2000 years ago. With the woman about to give birth, they were accommodated in very unsuitable surroundings. People dropped in bringing further disorder and chaos. Outcasts arrived (shepherds were regarded somewhat differently in those days) with their sheep, there was loud singing in the middle of the night (angels) and then some rather well dressed rich people (the three kings) dropped by.

I guess we never know who we are encountering when we find a little chaos in our midst. Thank you to all of you for coping. I am sad that some of you found the time difficult – it is not something any of us are equipped to deal with and we have to do our best to find a way through it. It felt like a curse at the time, but maybe we will look back and see it was actually a blessing. Who knows!

I hope that you all have a blessed time this Christmas. It cannot be the same as we would normally expect from many points of view – but it will happen and next year it will happen again, but hopefully with more carols and socialising in 2021.

With love and prayers for you all
Rev Rachel

PS – all this rain – and the church won't be getting soaked, the new drainage system is a little miracle!



Parish Council

The longer the Covid restrictions go on the harder it is for me to write any Parish council news, although we are still carrying out all normal parish business by email and Zoom. It seems that nothing is happening at all in the village which makes me think, what happened before Covid.

Of course lots happened. We are lucky to have a village which is the envy of other communities. People often say how much we have going on for such a small village. Sadly virtually all socialising seems to have ceased, but of course it hasn't. Every walk round the lanes brings encounters, albeit brief. We speak to someone everyday either over a fence or on the phone. There is still heart and optimism to be found.

Lock down ends soon. Although it will still be a difficult road ahead for some months, there certainly looks like light at the end of the tunnel. Christmas may be different but hopefully restrictions will be eased enough so we can spend it with our loved ones. At the very least we can all drive to the playing field on the 20th December to sing and shout Happy Christmas.

I wish all a Happy Christmas and much better New Year.

Graham.

Village Hall and Playing Field

Sadly the Village Hall remains closed for the time being. Hopefully we will reopen in the New Year.

I reported in the last newsletter that we had finally received our three quotes, this has enabled us to move forward with the new play equipment. We have now selected our preferred tender which is Playquip. The process of obtaining grants has now started but again Covid is holding us back. Whilst we have some funding likely already, the main grants are hampered by the fact that these bodies are only funding Covid related causes at the moment. However early spring should bring a turnaround and we expect to raise a substantial portion of grants to enable us to go forward and hopefully start work.

In the meantime our small group of volunteers have been busying themselves on trimming up and tidying the playing field and Wiggy is doing a grand job of trimming the hedges round the field. We are so lucky to have him in the village. Our special thanks to D.E.Keeble for all the wonderful work they undertake round the village.

Graham

The Ship



We are approaching the month 10 of our tenure as the crew of the The Ship. Where does time go? It has been a steep but hugely enjoyable (well most of the time) learning curve.

Another new set of rules to interpret and implement. On that note can the team at The Ship thank you all for your support during these difficult times and also for your forbearance as we try and implement a safe method of working without it becoming too draconian.

Moving forward we have reintroduced Pizzas on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. Collection or delivery.

The team are about to commence Operation Christmas Uplift, D day -3.

Our overall preparations are being somewhat hampered by not knowing exactly what regulations we will be constrained under. Never the less come what may The Ship will be decorated, rest assured we will work dam hard to ensure to offer a fun happy festive pub environment over this Christmas and New Year.

On the Christmas front, the Christmas Menu will be unveiled on Friday 20th November. And will run from 2nd December until and including 23rd December.

Christmas Opening (subject to Government Intervention)

Christmas Day 12hrs to 14.00hrs Drinks Only

Boxing Day 12.00hrs to 16.hrs food

12.00hrs to 17.00 drinks

New Years Day 12.00hrs to 16.00hrs food

12.00hrs to 17.00 drinks

Early in 2021 we are running a Servant Auction (again subject to legislation). We already have a number of willing volunteers (libations were involved prior to volunteering). Please contact us if you wish to volunteer. The auction will see the volunteers being auctioned off for a period of 4 hours. Telephone and international bidders are expected. All proceeds to charity.

Prior to closing Terry and the whole crew wish you and your family a very safe and a superb Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year, also lets all hope for a return of normality in 2021. *(see page 6 for a tad more from Ken)*

Far from Home

With time pressing and your writer a little under the weather I'm cheating slightly and lifting something I wrote years ago for the Blaxhall website, so the following will no doubt be familiar to some of you, but hopefully still of interest to others. Inspired by the current talk of separation/togetherness at Christmas, it's a look back at the plight of Blaxhall's naughty brothers John and William Ling and their families.

On the 29th March 1837 William Ling, aged 47 years, along with his half brother John, was committed to Woodbridge Gaol and charged with stealing a pig from a barn yard in Farnham



The brothers were briefly held on the prison hulk York at Gosport, where the gaoler described John as being of 'bad character'.

belonging to farmer Crisp Plant. At the General Quarter Sessions held at Woodbridge on Wednesday 5th April 1837 both William and John were convicted over the theft of said pig. William was convicted of stealing the pig and John of receiving and eating it. They had no intention of going easily, John initially refusing to allow Constable Daniels to search his house, while brother William locked the pantry and withheld the key. Ultimately however the searches went ahead and a variety of incriminating porcine portions were unearthed around

house and garden. Both men received the same sentence - transportation to Tasmania for 14 years. The men left England on board the convict transport vessel *Susan* on 5 August 1837, which arrived in Tasmania on 21 November and where John remained until his death in 1865. William however, did not survive the passage. He died on 17th October and was buried at sea, one of six convicts who died enroute. John's unfortunate wife Charlotte and 4 children found themselves forced into the workhouse at Wickham Market, where the two boys died the following year. To rub salt into the wound, a row erupted between the workhouse and Blaxhall's rector Ellis Wade over who should shoulder the cost of the youngest child's burial, with Wade threatening to send the three-year-old's body back again should it arrive in Blaxhall. Charlotte was last seen living alone as a laundress in London in 1851, the same year her husband's sentence was due to end some 8000 miles away. William's wife, Alethea, managed to cling to their Blaxhall home until her death in 1842, but several of her children also arrived in the workhouse in the following years.

John, described as being 5'6½, with brown hair, grey eyes and sallow complexion, served his term in Tasmania, eventually being freed early, in 1843. Rumour has it that he had a fling with one Miss Sheedy and fathered a son, John, in 1845. What's more certain is that he died of dysentery on 22 July 1865 and was buried in the local cemetery at Bagdad.



John Ling's headstone in Bagdad, Tasmania.



Covid is keeping us waiting for the new play equipment, but in the meantime a group of volunteers, including Wiggy with his hedge trimmer, are ensuring the hall and field remain neat, tidy and attractive.

Drive-In Carols!

20th Dec at 2pm on
Blaxhall Playing Field

Deck your car with boughs of Holly!
Chocolate prize for the "best decked car!"

Bring Your Own Refreshments

Proceeds to the church and
playing field village hall



Drive-in Carols Small Print

As excited as we are about the drive-in, keeping everybody safe and well is of course our #1 priority, so please see Blaxhall's Facebook page for full details of health and safety plans/requirements for the big event, as well as weather updates and any changes to the Covid rules situation.
[Facebook.com/blaxhall](https://www.facebook.com/blaxhall)

...from page 4 - A promise from Ken at The Ship!

Prior to opening night if I get sponsorship of £250 plus, I will work from 5pm until close on opening night, in similar attire to the picture below. With all proceeds going to the East Anglian Children's Hospice





Blaxhall Book Swap

Or should we call it Blaxhall Book Stop?

Sadly Blaxhall no longer has a bus service and our lovely bus shelter is used only for children waiting for the school bus, actually just one child at the moment.

So time to give it a new lease of life. Unfortunately although very pretty on the outside, the inside had some 'artwork' not quite so pleasing. So Amy from the youth hostel set to work with brush and paint and has transformed it into a space where you can choose your book or just sit and have a quiet read.

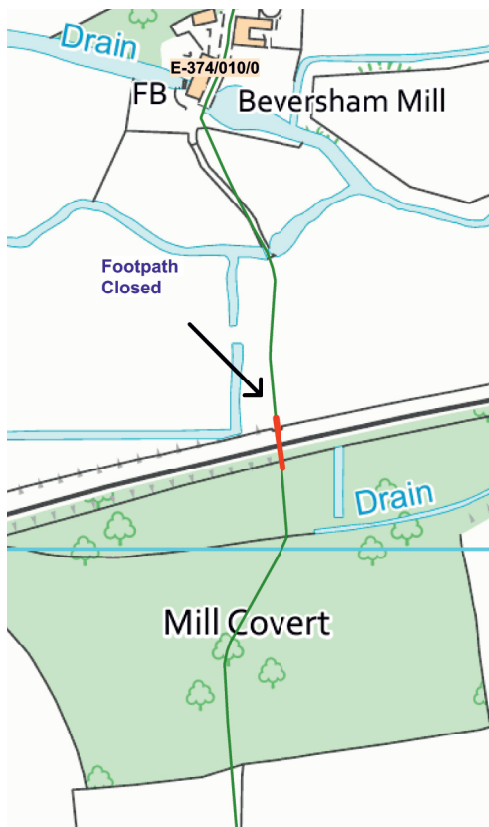
During the first lock down we lucky to have a book swap in the youth hostel foyer, but since then the hostel has been in use so the books had to go. The bus shelter seemed the obvious place to resurrect it. Luckily Amy had lots of books and puzzles to stock it with and already we have people walking by taking and leaving books.

So come along to Mill Common and choose your next book and maybe leave one that someone else might like. There are also jigsaw puzzles to test your patience in the long winter evenings and a table of unwanted free items.

Naomi

Footpath Closures

The section of footpath crossing the railway near Mill Cove will be closed between 9pm-6am from 14/12/20 to 24/12/20 and between 10pm-6.30am from 18/1/21 to 22/1/21.



Sizewell C

A new 30-day public consultation is underway - from Wednesday 18 November to Friday 18 December - based on the latest proposed changes. You can view, and respond to, the proposals at the following website:
<https://magpielanding.traverse.org.uk/surveys/sizewellC>

Blaxhall Church Needs your Recipes!

We are raising funds by compiling a recipe book and all proceeds from its sale will go towards the Church Restoration Fund. Share your favourite recipes and any anecdotes about them.

Please send your recipes to:

Claire Peck
Beverisham Mill
Church Road
Little Glemham
IP13 0BJ

Email: claire@peck.net

Or hand to a PCC member





Parish Councillors

Graham Bowles	01728 688192 (Chairman)	Karen Baker	01728 688200
Shane Pictor	01728 688205	Ray Herring	01728 746337
Jonathan Cutting	01728 688003	Mark Oakley	01728 687507
Joanne Peters	01394 459400 (Parish Clerk)	Maggie Jennings	01728 687689

Suffolk Coastal District Councillor - Ray Herring 07885 249218

ray.herring@suffolkcoastal.gov.uk

Suffolk County Councillor - Andrew Reid 07545 423799 andrew.reid@suffolk.gov.uk

Copies of minutes and agendas can be found at <http://blaxhall.onesuffolk.net/parish-council/>

Parish Council meetings are held in the Village Hall at 7.30 and are open to all parishioners, the public and press. The 2021 dates are: **Wednesday 6th January, Wednesday 3rd March, Wednesday 5th May, Wednesday 7th July, Wednesday 1st September and Wednesday 3rd November.**

Community Transport – “Connecting Communities” **01728 635938** The service booking line operates 08.45am to 4pm, Mon-Fri

Blaxhall Commons & Open Spaces Charitable Trust – www.blaxhallcommonstrust.org
For contact details of all trustees ring Mark Oakley 01728 687507

The **Mobile Library** comes to Blaxhall, and stops at **The Youth Hostel 9.35 – 10am** calling every 4 weeks on Wednesdays: **2019 dates: 31 July, 28 August, 25 September, 23 October, 20 November, 18 December.**

Large print, Audio & Childrens' books, also CDs and DVDs are available for a small charge. Contact Pete Wells or Helen Hudson on help@suffolklibraries.co.uk, visit the website <http://suffolkreads.onesuffolk.net/libraries-and-mobiles/> or phone **01473 584563**

To put something in the Village Noticeboard, please ring Graham Bowles 01728 688192
To put something in the Newsletter email to shane@blaxhall.com tel. 01728 688205

Allotment information contact Sophie Martin on 07724 356916,
Blaxhall.Allotments@gmail.com

Deadline for next Newsletter - 12th February